

13 March 2022

To the members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am writing **IN SUPPORT** of:

- [S.B. No. 387](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE.
- [S.B. No. 392](#) AN ACT CONCERNING STATEMENTS MADE BY JUVENILES.

I am writing **IN STRONG OPPOSITION** to the following bills:

- [S.B. No. 365](#) AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORMS
- S.B. No. 388: AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFENSE OF A PERSON OR A PERSON'S DWELLING, PLACE OF WORK OR MOTOR VEHICLE.
- [H.B. No. 5418](#) AN ACT REVISING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE STATUTES AND INSURANCE STATUTES CONCERNING THEFT OF A MOTOR VEHICLE
- [H.B. No. 5417](#) AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE JUSTICE AND SERVICES AND FIREARMS BACKGROUND CHECKS.
- [S.B. No. 386](#) AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF THE JUVENILE DELINQUENCY LAWS OF THIS STATE.
- [S.B. No. 16](#) AN ACT ADDRESSING GUN VIOLENCE AND JUVENILE CRIME

My name is Christine Altman and my children are congregants of Riverfront Family Church, a member of the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA). This issue is important to me because I believe that all children in Connecticut have a right to safety, education, and nurturance within our communities. They need to be safe to walk in any neighborhood without fear of being harassed and traumatized.

I believe that the bills I oppose will make many children unsafe along racial lines, and ultimately make the state of Connecticut much much less safe overall. No community is served by an increase in incarceration rates. I would feel utterly ashamed if these initiatives passed as they are based on ugly, racialized rhetoric used to instill fear in white folks like myself.

Now is the time to invest in issues that really matter to youth – mental health treatment, affordable housing, public education, job training, healthcare, and not to roll back important advances in youth justice through this legislation.

The Juvenile Justice System in Connecticut has been largely successful. It follows best practices. Legislative changes are made based on facts and data. Legislation derived from the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (which is why we support SB 387) is open to discussion and voting by members including state legislators, prosecutors, public defenders, state agencies, judges, police, state advocates, victim advocates, community-based organizations, adults and youth. Connecticut has been a model in the country on how to successfully and safely reduce the juvenile justice system and expand diversion and services for youth. **The legislation I oppose today is a departure from these practices.**

In the bills I oppose today there are detrimental policy proposals that would do harm to our youth and set us back. In some of the proposals, there are some items worth considering, but the helpful pieces of these legislative proposals should come through the Juvenile Justice and Policy Oversight Committee. . Why would any child need to be held more than 6 hours? Is there any time limit set? What does this mean for families? The system shouldn't have the right to indefinitely separate a child from their

caregivers and family. Nor should they allow for automatic transfer to regular criminal docket for fourteen-year-olds if charged with certain violent crimes. I have 15-year-olds. They are still babies. Children do not belong in prisons with adults. That's a horrific dereliction of our responsibility towards our youth. Imagine a teenager in your life. How do you think they'd fare in the adult prison system? I will never support the torture of anyone's children. I hope fervently that you will not either. Today I oppose these legislative proposals, with the exception of SB 387 which comes out of the Juvenile Justice and Oversight Committee, through which all of these proposals should be vetted.

The other bills are rooted in a misinformation campaign, lack sound analysis and will lead to more of our youth becoming system involved. This is unacceptable. It's time to root out white supremacy in our legislation, not add more of it.

Sincerely,

Christine Altman
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